

LETTER FROM MAYOR CHRIS RILEY ON COVID-19 CRISIS – 5/15/20

Dear Leon Valley Community:

As stated in last week's letter, on May 19th the city council will decide when to re-open City Hall, City Administration, Planning and Zoning, City Cashiers, City Library, Municipal Court, Senior Center and park restrooms, playgrounds, basketball courts and park fitness equipment, all of which have been closed since March 25, 2020. Council will also discuss at the May 19th city council meeting whether the swimming pools will open this summer and under what conditions due to COVID-19. Staff has recommended that, if council decides to open the pools, the Forest Oaks pool should be the only one to open. Citizen input is important to help the council make the best decision for our community. If you are unable to attend the council meeting on Tuesday (Citizens to Be Heard), you can email your comments to s.pass@leonvalleytexas.gov , by 4pm on 5/19/20.

The weekly conference call between County Judge Nelson Wolff representative and the Suburban Mayors was held on May 14, 2020. Dr. Junda Woo of San Antonio Metro Health gave an update on the testing program. Their department is under a mandate to test all nursing homes residents and staff over the next two weeks. The challenge is getting the test results back in a timely fashion. On May 13th, the Governor directed

the Texas National Guard to begin disinfecting nursing homes with an ionize spray, which will begin on the south side of San Antonio.

Dr. Woo also reported that guidelines for COVID 19 testing have now been expanded to persons who do not have symptoms. Testing resources have increased, with 1600 tests available on a daily basis, but only 600 COVID-19 tests being performed (a net of 1,000 tests per day not being used). Prior testing had been targeted to people with symptoms and emergency and health care workers. Increased wide spread testing is a way to determine who has the virus and isolate and/ or quarantine them to stop the spread of the infection. A new testing site is now located in Leon Valley! ReNue RX Bandera, 6428 Bandera Road (located within Health Texas Clinic) is now conducting COVID 19 testing. This testing is supported by Health and Human Services and uses an appointment system to do curbside COVID -19 testing free of charge (must pre-register). Call (210)256-8629.

Bexar County has received \$79.1 million from the federal government under the CARES legislation to help the county deliver services to residents and businesses through this pandemic. I watched the Bexar County Commissioners meeting and gleaned from the funding what would pertain to suburban cities. All funding requests will go through the county;

the suburban cities have not received any direct allocation from this money. Commissioners Court allocated \$34.9 million for workforce initiatives for COVID displaced workers in suburban cities/unincorporated areas to help them move to reemployment, including training, stipend and 'wrap around' services (day care, counseling, tutoring).

Small Business is allocated \$7.7 million, which includes \$5 million for the LiftFund loan program and \$1.5 million for the LiftFund grant program.

Rent Assistance: There is \$5 million in the TRAM program (Temporary Rental Assistance Measure) for residents from unincorporated Bexar County and suburban cities.

The county program also provides emergency cash assistance for unincorporated and suburban city residents (\$150 per household, with additional \$50 per household member for a total maximum one-time benefit of \$300).

Renee Watson, the Director of Bexar County Small Business and Entrepreneurship Department, announced the program *COVID-Safe Business Items* to support small businesses with 25 or less employees in unincorporated and suburban city areas. The program provides a free, limited supply of personal protective equipment (masks, touchless

thermometers, hand sanitizer, gloves and Plexiglas covering) to help protect employees during the transition while employers line up long-term supplies. Businesses are aided to establish vendor relationships to allow them continued access to PPE and to buy local, if possible. Businesses must register at <https://www.bexar.org/FormCenter/Small-Business-Entrepreneurship-Dept-4/COVID19-Essential-Items-Bag-Program-205>. Once completed, the business will be contacted within 24 hours to review the application.

For more information on these programs and how to apply, go to www.bexar.org or contact County Commissioner Justin Rodriguez's office for anyone living west of Evers Road in Leon Valley or Commissioner Kevin Wolff's office for anyone living east of Evers road in Leon Valley by calling (210) 335-2011. The balance of the CARES funding is directed at Technology & Digital Access, Facilities, Elections, Administrative and Reserve. All monies must be used by December 31, 2020 or be returned to the federal government.

UPDATED NUMBERS

As of May 14, 2020, the total number of cases reported in Bexar County is 2,041 (up from 1,805 as of May 7st) with 59 deaths (up from 54 deaths on May 7th). Of the total number of test performed to date (39,065

by Metro Health and other labs), 94.4% tested negative and 5.50% tested positive with 0.10% testing inconclusive. Males make up 56% of the cases and females 44%. Currently 68 people are hospitalized and 38 of those hospitalized are in intensive care, with 26 on ventilators. There are 41-80 cases in Leon Valley's zip code 78240 and 11-20 cases in zip code 78238.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

For those who are able to offer financial or volunteer help, the San Antonio Food Bank (210) 431-8388) and Meals on Wheels (210) 599-7405, Ext. 309) need support. Also blood donations at the South Texas Blood and Tissue Center (210) 731-5555) are needed (all health and safety precautions are followed). San Antonio Pets Alive! is seeking people to foster and adopt dogs and cats. Also, call on your neighbors to see how they are doing. If you know of someone in our community who needs help please let me know (with their permission).

The message of thanks cannot be said enough. THANK YOU to all the health care workers and first Responders, who continue to put their lives on the line to treat and save other lives during this emergency. Now that the economy is beginning to re-open, Dr. Woo requested that we continue to understand the need to social distance, wash hands, wear masks and use hand sanitizer. If you are sick stay at home to minimize

exposure and get tested. Take care. Stay healthy, safe and remain positive!

Sincerely, Chris

(210) 618-2092 – Please call with any questions or concerns.